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No. III.

LITHOGRAPHIC TRANSFERS.

The Sum of TWENTY POUNDS, being the Premium offered, was presented to Mr. JOSEPH NETHERCLIFT, 8, Newman Street, for his improved method of making Lithographic Transfers.

LITHOGRAPHIC drawings were originally made with a peculiar ink, on paper covered with a coat of size, and were then transferred to the stone by warming this latter, laying the drawing on its face downwards, and passing both through a rolling-press. Hot water, by means of a sponge, or in any other convenient way, was then applied to the paper, till the coat of size on which the drawing had been made was reduced to a soft, pulpy state, which allowed the paper to be stripped off, leaving the drawing fixed, by the previous pressure and heat, to the face of the stone.

Many advantages attended this original method, as compared with that which has now nearly superseded it; namely, making the drawing on the stone itself: for, in this latter mode, the artist works on a cumbrous, unportable slab, and is obliged to make his drawing in an inverted position; whereas, by the use of prepared paper, he had a light and portable material, together with the great advantage of making his drawing in a natural position, which, being that to which artists are accustomed, the work was free from stiffness and constraint.

The objection to the method by transfer was, that the lines were coarse, and only adapted to free sketches, being deficient in that fineness and precision required in most works of art, especially those intended for illustration of objects of natural history, or as specimens of the higher departments of art. The drawings of all such objects are made on the stone itself. The Society, conceiving that it would be a great point gained so to improve the ink and paper, and generally the whole method of making lithographic transfers, as to render it applicable to most of the purposes for which drawing on the stone itself is now had recourse to, offered a premium with this object, which was successfully claimed by Mr. Netherclift. The Society do not suppose that Mr. Netherclift's process is incapable of improvement; but, from the specimens produced before them, and from the unanimous testimony of several very competent judges, they believe that the process which they now make known will be found to produce work of a very superior quality to the lithographic transfers which have hitherto come under the notice of the public.

Composition of Materials.

The transfer paper is thus made :—

Take the proportions as follow :—A quarter lb. of tapioca and arrow-root; boil them separately into a paste, and then unite them, and pour sufficient hot water to make the whole a thin paste, which must be strained through a muslin rag : add to the above a quarter lb. of flake white, well ground in water previously, and stir it in with the paste. The paper, either thick or thin, should be rather porous, or what is called half-sized paper. First, with a flat camel's hair brush lay a coat of common

size on the paper, and let it dry in ; then lay on the paste in the most careful and *even* manner *thrice* following, but dried between each time of laying on. Thus the whole surface will be properly covered : if there should be any part omitted, the work on it will be imperfect. As soon as the paper is dry, it should be either well *cold pressed*, or sent to the glazing mill and flatted between iron rollers, which clears the surface,—and the glazed part should be on the back side of the paper, which is done by rolling two sheets together face to face. The work on the paper is, if fine, executed with a steel pen, as the specimen herewith sent, the dark parts with a common crow-quill.

The ink is composed of equal quantities of yellow soap and shell-lac, boiled and burnt together, with lamp-black sufficient to make it black, which forms a cake, to be rubbed up as Indian ink with warm or cold water. I prefer to use no tallow or bees-wax, and am prepared to shew that the art of lithography, as connected with ink work, is not founded on the opposite qualities of acid and grease ; for the above ink requires no acid to neutralise the alkali of the soap, the grease of which is fixed by the extreme quantity of shell-lac. Thus the acid is avoided, and the lines are not so liable to be injured. In extreme cases, however, where a mass of shade is condensed, a little acid may be used with effect. Nitric acid, diluted with water, is the proper requisite.

The act of transferring is easy :—Let the stone be moderately warmed ; damp the back of the paper on which the work has been executed till it lies perfectly flat ; take care no *wet* touches the work ; lay the paper carefully on the warm stone, and on it lay flat soft paper, which will absorb the wet on the back of the transfer paper. Pass it through the press three or four times

with increased pressure, after which the paper will peel off, leaving the composition as well as the drawing on the stone. Wash off the former, and rub the drawing over with a strong coat of gum arabic water. Lay it till cold, and print.

JOSEPH NETHERCLIFT.

No. IV.

PLASTER CASTS FROM MEDALS.

The following Communication, on making Plaster Casts from Medals, was received from Mr. W. KELSALL, Engraver, 8, Clarendon Street, Somers Town, to whom the thanks of the Society were voted for the same.

THE substances most commonly used for forming moulds from medals and other small works of art, are sulphur, plaster of Paris, and wax. The first of these is, perhaps, in most general use, from the ease with which the mould is made. It is, however, objectionable, as it invariably injures the medal, and, besides, seldom brings the work up with a sharp edge, occasioned by the oil used on the surface of the medal to prevent adhesion; it may also, in some measure, be caused by the cooling of the sulphur before it has opportunity to run into the finer parts of the work. As it is necessary to oil the mould before an impression can be made, it is very rare that a good one can be procured.